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on the part of the people I talked to; men may remember the names of their wives, and do know those of their daughters, but practically never those of any other married women.

Personal names are of practically no importance to the Lepchas of Zongu and they have no sort of permanence. On the third day after birth, when the lama casts the infant's horoscope, he will discover his 'sacred name'; but this is never spoken by anyone, merely inscribed on the horoscope; it is never used subsequently; and nobody knows their own sacred name. On the third-day birth feast one of the people present (usually an 'aunt' or the officiating Mun) will give the child some name; it may refer to some physical peculiarity (e.g. *Thyak Thimbu*—Big Head), to some incident which took place while the mother was carrying the child, or may just be the day of the week on which it was born. In the case of a child born after several previous children had died young, he or she is often given a deprecating name such as Peut, which means a wandering Tibetan beggar-monk, or Tafong, which means a manger. But these names are equally impermanent. As the child grows older anybody may give him a nickname; thus Kurma *gyapön* as an infant was named by an aunt Tayout; his mother called him Kurma because as a suckling he was bad tempered (people say *kur kur* to a cross child). As children grow up their nicknames increase; and a person's name is simply that which is used most often. Many people have two or three names of equal validity, a state of affairs which at the beginning caused me enormous confusion. Thus Peut, Chano's 'brother', was also called Chinya, Nariya Kochet, Serving Aving and so forth. Except for outsiders names are of very little importance; the householder in whose name the property is registered must keep that name in use; otherwise names are almost non-functional.

It occasionally happens that as part of the cure of an illness the lamas will order their patient to change his or her name for a year; in such cases a new nickname is provided. If the banned name is meaningful the word is not avoided in ordinary conversation. The names of dead siblings are never given to new-born children, and those of the recently dead very seldom. It occasionally happens that the lama finds from his horoscope that the new-born child is the reincarnation of a dead ancestor; even in such cases, though the situation is considered mildly auspicious, the child is not given the name it bore in the earlier incarnation.

Names have a certain negative effect; a person should never

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601 curious anomaly may be noted. There is only one word to denote both son and daughter; and similarly one word has to do duty for both one's younger (but not elder) brother and sister. When it is required to distinguish the sex of these individuals it is necessary to add the prefix denoting, respectively, male or female. In actual practice this is rarely necessary, except when talking to strangers, who might be expected not to know the composition of any particular family.

In a small community such as Lingtem nearly everybody is able to trace some sort of relationship to everyone else. This is particularly easy, for instance, when a man refers to a person whom we should describe doubtfully as a "cousin several times removed" as his brother. It is, however, extremely confusing to a stranger of an alien culture; but in view of the fact that pedigrees are common property and that there are no skeletons in the Lepcha's cupboards, no such difficulty arises amongst the people themselves. Until one gets used to the system one naturally thinks of two "brothers," for instance, as being sons of the same father. It is, of course, quite possible that they may be; but on the other hand it is equally possible that one is the son of a man whose mother is descended from the other's great-grandmother's sister! But all these details are common property in the village and no confusion arises. To explain them here would need a whole series of complicated charts, the sight of which would undoubtedly cause the reader to lay down this book in disgust. That, however, is a risk I am not willing to take: but in any case, such things are of interest only to experts; and even they, to judge by the uncut pages in the books of some of my friends, are sometimes human!

● 852 We may now consider the subject of Lepcha home life in general. It will be convenient to start with babies and children, in reading the account of which due allowance should be made for my bachelor prejudice and ignorance!

Three days after a child is born its head is smeared with a mixture of butter and soot, the latter scraped from the family cooking pot. This is believed to hasten the closing

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of the fontanel, and remains on the baby's head until it wears away. At the same time snail-shells, as already described, are tied round its neck and wrists and sometimes fastened to its clothing.

There is also a ceremony on the third day after birth, which is called *Pa-Gong Chi-tong*, the latter part of which word means merely *chi*-drinking—an indispensable part of all Lepcha ceremonies.

Very early in the morning, before any of the guests arrive, the floor is swept with wormwood and a little incense is burned. At the same time a Mun will come and wave offerings over the mother, should she have required his (or her) services on account of a difficult delivery; but if the birth was normal this office is omitted. The Mun takes a previously boiled chicken, divides it, and sets it on a tray, together with parched rice, ginger, and some pieces of wild birds' flesh. There is also the usual buttered cup for libations of *chi*, and the whole is offered to the god of birth. In the meantime most of the guests will have arrived, and the offering is now divided amongst them.

If the child is a boy, and particularly in the case of a first-born, an ox, pig, or goat will be sacrificed. In the case of a girl an animal is not generally slaughtered; but if the family is well-off it is usual to buy some meat and give each of the guests a piece, for true Lepcha hospitality demands that no guest should leave without a present of some sort. Whenever we went to a Lepcha house we were invariably given something to take away. On the occasion of big ceremonies it was usually a portion of the sacrificial meat; but even when we went on an ordinary friendly visit we were always given eggs, milk, or grain.

In the case of a boy each guest brings one rupee and a ceremonial scarf of butter muslin; but for a girl the usual present is six annas or a chicken. The scarf is not given for girls.

Only very rich people will go to the expense of sacrificing an animal for a baby girl, and when the Mun offers it to

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852 554 562 824 the birth-god he will entreat it to send a boy next time. He will concentrate on this matter throughout the third night. He takes three tufts of elephant grass tied up with coloured thread, and attaches them to ordinary finger-rings. He then waves this bunch of grass slowly over the parents of the newly-born child, and afterwards over all present.

852 562 773 Now in Azoom Aru Purtam, a place through which all babies must pass before being born, there is a waterfall called *Lung Fing* and a well called *Rungzel Oonglop*. The waterfall is a boy and the well is a girl. When he concentrates on the matter the Mun is able to visit this place in spirit, when he persuades the god to make the waterfall and the well change places.

The coloured threads with which the elephant grass is tied are offered to the spirit of the waterfall, after which the grass is put in a pot of water and kept on the household altar. A chicken is now offered to Nazong Nyu, the progenitor of the human race, after which the two rings are given to the child's mother to wear. The performance of this ceremony, for which there does not appear to be any specific name, will assure that the next child born is a boy.

852 787 553 If a Lama is present on the third day he will work out the child's horoscope and give it a name; otherwise the child's father will go to his house. It may be noted, however, that the names given by Lamas are never used and in many cases are forgotten. Someone present will usually give the child a nickname, which will be selected in accordance with its appearance. Common names of this sort are "the fair one"; "the dark one," and so on; but the most extraordinary one I ever came across was *Kalok Tikung*, which being translated comes to mean "The rat's grandfather." Children are 551 generally called by these nicknames; but otherwise the custom of teknonymy is usual. An adult may occasionally be called by his name, but it is not considered polite to do so; and in no circumstances may a Lama's real name be mentioned. There does not appear to be any objection to

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mentioning the names of the dead; nor does a woman mind 551
giving the name of her husband; but she will, of course, say
only the nickname.

While someone is selecting a nickname for the baby, one 852 ●
of its aunts (it makes no difference which) ties red and white 553
threads round its wrists. All this time the baby will be lying
in its mother's lap in the kitchen, and it is never taken near
the Mun who is doing the ceremony. It must be kept awake,
however, and as soon as the ceremony is over will sleep
soundly. But before this its mother will feed it with a little
butter, to which she may add the merest trace of powdered
rice. On this occasion a necklace will usually be put round
the baby's neck by its mother, but this is removed as soon as
the ceremony is over and not put on again until such time
as the child can crawl; otherwise it is thought that the baby
will not take the breast properly.

With the exception of people actually living in the house 846
no one may see a newly-born baby until the morning of the
third day after its birth. People do not make any remark
on first beholding the child; nor are they expected to con-
gratulate its parents. There is, however, no harm in remark-
ing upon its likeness to either of its parents. The usual
insincere platitudes such as are commonly uttered by us on
these occasions are, however, not expected, and it is con-
sidered perfectly polite to behold the infant in stony silence.
It seems to me an excellent custom.

A mother does not usually leave the house for the three
days following the birth of her child, but after this she may,
if strong enough, start going out again. She usually resumes
her ordinary housework on the fourth day and the heavier
field work on the seventh. For some weeks after the birth
the mother is given extra food, which usually takes the form
of chicken soup. This in itself sounds a very little thing; 846
but to anyone who has been accustomed to dealing with 562
the more primitive Hindu peoples of India (and perhaps
also the Mohammedans, but I have no experience of them)
it is a refreshing change to find a mother treated with

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846 consideration instead of being looked upon as an outcast,
[562] and a source of defilement to others.

It is usual for everybody living in a house where a birth has recently taken place to wash themselves and their clothes, first in hot water inside the house, and afterwards in the nearest stream. The mother generally continues to wash every three days for the first month following the child's birth, and the baby itself is said to be washed each night and morning for a month. This, however, I think is merely
[783 a counsel of perfection and not often observed. I should
514] add that there is amongst the Lepchas no idea of ceremonial uncleanliness, either at this or at any other time; nor have they the common obsession with defecation, which leads Indians to look upon the left hand (with which the body is always cleaned) as itself an unclean thing.

●852 During the third-day celebrations the mother will usually wear new or at least freshly-washed clothes. The baby itself will be wrapped in a cloth, the colour of which should be in accordance with its birth-signs. Thus, if it has been
[822] ascertained that the child will become a Lama, for instance, it will be wrapped in a yellow cloth; if a hunter, then in red; if a woman of loose morals, lilac; and so on.

843 As soon as a woman becomes pregnant both she and her husband must take certain precautions, the neglect of which is thought to cause, amongst other things, difficult delivery. During the fifth month of pregnancy it is usual to call in a Mun, who will wave elephant grass over the mother and thus ensure an easy birth.

During the whole time of pregnancy and up to the third day after the birth of the child both the father and mother, should they be making garden fences, must work unassisted. Failure to observe this precaution will cause a difficult delivery.

The father must not take fish out of a trap, or the child will be born with its nose stopped up. Nor must he lock anything up, with the exception of his own private box, or the child will refuse to descend from the womb until such